

CONVENTION NEWS

2023 FREE WILL BAPTIST NATIONAL CONVENTION

WEDNESDAY, JULY 19 | RALEIGH, NC | WWW.NAFWB.ORG

TURNING TO TAMPA

FREE WILL BAPTISTS VISIT **THE SUN COAST** FOR THE 2024 CONVENTION

July 21-24, 2024, the National Association of Free Will Baptists will host its 88th National Convention in Tampa, Florida, returning to the city for the first time since 2013.

The city of Tampa, which sprawls along the Sun Coast, is beautiful, especially the riverwalk located along the side of the convention center. At each end of the riverwalk, you will find a wide variety of dining options. Riverwalk attractions include restaurants, parks, aquariums, museums, and a bowling alley. In addition, you can tour the **American Victory Ship**, one of only four fully operational WWII ships in the country.

Tampa has exploded during the 11 years since the convention last met in the city. Not only has the entire downtown skyline changed, but the population also has increased dramatically. Along with the growth has come an array of new restaurants and eateries. But it is an old favorite that draws the most attention.

Tampa is considered **the birthplace of the Cuban sandwich**, first served in restaurants catering to Cuban immigrants. You will find numerous places to sample an authentic Cuban sandwich made with ham, (mojo) roasted pork, Swiss cheese, pickles, mustard—and sometimes salami—on grilled Cuban bread.

Worried about transportation? Tampa International Airport is only a 15-minute drive from the convention center. If you are looking for a memorable way to explore the city, check out the **TECO Line Streetcars**. The historical trolley



runs past the convention center and ten other sites every 15 minutes. The best part? It's free! Find more info on their website: tecolinestreetcar.org.

Do you love nature and the outdoors? Tampa is a great place for you! Find these beautiful Gulf Coast and Tampa Bay options within a 20-minute drive:

- + Bayshore Fitness Trail (1 min)
- + Palmetto Beach (7 min)
- + Davis Island (7 min)
- + Desoto Park (8 min)
- + McKay Bay Nature Park (8 min)
- + Beach Park (12 min)
- + Ben T. Davis Beach (14 min)
- + Gardenville Beach (17 min)
- + Picnic Island Beach (19 min)
- + Gandy Beach Mangroves (20 min)

When Free Will Baptists gather in Tampa, we will take a closer look at what it means to be **Doers of the Word**. The Vertical 3 Conference theme is **Follow Me**, considering what it means to follow Christ and be an example of Him.

Let's start counting the days until we come together again in Tampa!

Find convention updates:
nafwb.org/convention

AS FOR YOU TAKEAWAYS

WEDNESDAY

Are you called to be a missionary, pastor, or teacher?

Could you start outreach through Child Evangelism Fellowship?

Can you be in ETEAM, CMP, or THP?

Can you help with disaster response?

Can you join The Hope Initiative?

Could you participate in Go Global?

Will you give to reach the world?

Watch podcasts with Doug Earls (Baby Boomers) and Tim York (Pastor Shortage).

NAFWB

THE LAST QUINQUAGENARIAN

This week marks 50 years since **Dr. Robert E. Picirilli** was elected to his first term on the Historical Commission. Let's put that milestone into perspective. In 1973...

- + Richard Nixon was President.
- + The Vietnam War was ongoing.
- + The Watergate Scandal was exploding into the public eye.
- + Loretta Lynn won big honors for "Coal Miner's Daughter."
- + The Dow Jones industrial average broke 1,000 for the first time.
- + The Apollo Mission put a man on the moon for the last time.

Fifty years is a long time! Over the five decades that followed, Dr. Picirilli became the cornerstone of the Historical Commission. He poured himself into acquiring, organizing, and cataloguing denominational historical materials, first as a commission member, then as the chair, and then as the curator of the growing collection.

The results of his efforts are phenomenal. Today, the Historical Collection holds 3,854 distinct entries, and most

entries contain multiple items. In some cases, a single entry represents a century or more of a particular periodical or the minutes of an association. In short, today the historical collection reaches into the hundreds of thousands of historical documents, books, and records. Dr. Picirilli also has been instrumental in researching and writing on Free Will Baptist history, from books to essays to occasional personal letters to remind churches and clerks of the importance of preserving historical materials.

In recent years, Dr. Picirilli guided the commission through an expansion into the digital world. The resulting website, **FWBHistory.com**, has become one of the largest online repositories of doctrinal history for any denomination, let alone a denomination our size.

Due to recent term limits adopted by the denomination, Dr. Picirilli will be **the last quinquagenarian**, that is, the last person to serve 50 consecutive years on a particular board. Somehow, that seems appropriate, and with these things in mind, the Historical Commission offers deep-felt appreciation to Robert E. Picirilli. And when you next see him, I hope you thank him as well.

Visit FWBHistory.com

Five things you probably didn't know about William Smith...

After serving from 2004-2023, William Smith, executive director of the Georgia State Association, stepped down from his role as convention assistant moderator. Many of us know William as that fun and crazy guy always ready with a one-liner or catchy comeback. We love his home-spun humor and the boiled peanuts he loves to share. But you may not know these five things about William:

1. He's not really from Georgia. Nope! He and his wife Terra both proudly claim West Virginia.
2. As a young man, he was a talented baseball player, from a family of Major Leaguers. (His uncle Billy Southworth is enshrined in the MLB Hall of Fame as a member of four World Series winning teams as player and coach).
3. William originally wanted to be an electrical engineer.

4. Cast iron is his weapon of choice...in the kitchen. He loves to cook, and William is a talented, self-taught chef.
5. Every American generation of William's family on his mother's side includes a preacher.
6. When Nathan Ruble and Jack Richey asked William if he would consider being assistant moderator, he asked them if they had lost their minds.
7. **He wants you to know something:** "Everything I have spiritually and materially, I owe this denomination. I have been so blessed by Free Will Baptists and I am grateful."

Read more in "From Coal Country to Colquitt" in the August-September issue of ONE Magazine, coming out in just a few weeks: www.onemag.org

News, Updates & Announcements

2023 Convention Registration Update

At noon, Wednesday, the National Association had registered **4,605** and Vertical Three had registered **3,033** for a unique total of **4,938**.

Picture this! Pictures from the convention are available online. Thanks to the hard work of Rodney Yerby and his photography staff, you can already download your favorite shots: nafwb.yerbyphoto.com

Are you missing something? Although the registration area (and lost and found) will be closed tonight after the service, you can contact the Free Will Baptist Executive Office at questions@nafwb.org or 877-767-7659 if are missing items.

New From D6 Family Ministry. D6 Everyday Foundations curriculum releases in September and is being shipped now. Learn more: <https://d6family.com/d6curriculum/>

How to Find the Right Pastor by Dr. Ron Hunter Jr. and Attorney David Gibbs III covers five search phases to create a profile of the ideal pastor for your church. This will ensure more qualified interviews and remove the risk of emotional selections that lead to repeating the process again two years later.

Be careful with pictures!

When you get home and start looking through photos, if you accidentally took pictures of attendees wearing red lanyards and nametags this year, please refrain from posting their photos online. These individuals are from areas of the world that require "creative access" to share the gospel. **Please help us take precaution** for their safety and the safeguarding of their ministries around the world.